



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Detailing Board Meeting held September 26-27, 2025

Greetings/Bienvenue!

This September marked the sole in-person meeting of the Board of Directors this Board year, and it was a meaningful and important moment for Equestrian Canada. Gathering together allowed us to build trust, deepen relationships, and engage in the kind of thoughtful conversations that are essential to good governance and effective leadership. I would like to thank Directors for the time they gave away from work, families, and home commitments, and staff for their preparation, patience, and professionalism in supporting the Board's work.

Across both days, the Board focused on its role as stewards of the organization—balancing oversight, strategic direction, and accountability—while remaining grounded in our shared passion for horses and sport. We were reminded that there is no perfect model for a national sport organization in a country as vast and diverse as Canada. Our responsibility is to make principled, well-informed decisions that serve the long-term health of the sport and the welfare of the horse, even when those decisions are complex or challenging.

The Board received a comprehensive quarterly management update and formally acknowledged the completion and closure of Strategy 2025, marking the end of a critical period of stabilization and modernization. This phase delivered tangible outcomes against key targets, including the successful implementation and growth of the Canadian Horse Identification Program (CHIP), expansion of national sport delivery with over 400 sanctioned competitions supporting more than 45,000 horses and 50,000 riders, and a strengthened coaching system surpassing 2,000 licensed and registered coaches across Canada. Governance was advanced through the initiation of a formal governance review and the first Athlete Director to be elected to the Board of Directors by the EC High Performance Athlete reps. The Board of Directors implementation of a structured CEO performance evaluation process, including a 360-degree assessment gathering input from Voting Members, peer organizations and funding partners, staff, committee members and athletes, reinforcing accountability at all levels of the organization. Additional milestones included enhancements to safe sport systems, enabling EC to onboard over 2,600 participants as part of the Canadian Safe Sport Program, access to officials education, with over 300 officials participating in 18 EC officials' clinics, the continued rollout of digital infrastructure such as eCampus 2.0 and the Vault; a shared database between EC and the Provincial/Territorial Sport Organizations (PTSO), and targeted investments of up to \$90,000 available annually through national funds supporting PTSO delivery of coach education and disaster relief across the country.

We are now moving confidently into Strategy 2028, with clarity that our focus must remain on accountability, transparency, and delivery in a non-utopic environment shaped by funding pressures, rising costs, evolving social expectations, and increasing regulatory complexity. Directors provided thoughtful input on the use of technology and data, enterprise risk management, stakeholder



communications, and the importance of aligning systems, people, and culture with our strategic objectives.

A significant portion of the Board’s discussion centred on the scale and importance of the upcoming Competition Review—one of the most complex initiatives the organization will undertake over the next quadrennial. Directors were clear in recognizing the need for a balanced, inclusive, and well-communicated approach that reflects the realities of a mixed commercial and non-commercial sport environment, regional differences, and the evolving needs of athletes, officials, coaches, organizers, and horses. The Board emphasized the importance of strong project governance, clear value propositions, and sustained engagement with Provincial and Territorial Sport Organizations and the broader community.

The Board also benefited from a valuable international perspective through the update from the Vice Chair of FEI Group IV, Canadian Mark Samuel, reinforcing the importance of Canada’s voice in global equestrian governance, ongoing rule evolution, and the central place of equine welfare in international sport. This global lens strengthens our domestic decision-making and reinforces the interconnected nature of our work.

On the second day, the Board focused attention to Safe Sport, governance, and culture. These discussions were thoughtful, serious, and grounded in our duty of care to participants, staff, volunteers, and members. The Board reinforced that Equestrian Canada’s Safe Sport framework operates in alignment with, and is accountable to, the Government of Canada’s Safe Sport policies and requirements, ensuring our processes reflect nationally mandated standards rather than independently determined approaches. Within this context, the Board provided clear direction to staff on strengthening communication, education, and transparency around processes and jurisdictions, while continuing to respect confidentiality and the independence of federally established mechanisms. This work is essential to maintaining trust and social licence, and it will remain an ongoing area of oversight for the Board.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion in leadership was another important area of reflection and learning. Directors engaged in open discussion with a subject matter expert about how EC can better reflect and serve the full breadth of the equestrian community, recognizing both the opportunities and responsibilities that come with national leadership. The Board reaffirmed that curiosity, humility, and continuous learning must underpin this work as we embed inclusive practices into governance and strategy, in part funded by Sport Canada.

Finally, the Board continued its commitment to financial sustainability and fundraising, acknowledging that the long-term success of our national programs and high-performance teams depends on a strong culture of philanthropy and engagement. Directors reaffirmed their role as ambassadors, advocates, and contributors—setting the tone, opening doors, and supporting staff efforts to build meaningful relationships with donors and partners.

The weekend concluded with Board participation in the National Dressage and Para-Dressage West Canadian Championships and a Red & White Fundraiser, reinforcing the connection between governance decisions and the lived experience of athletes, horses, owners, officials, organizers, and supporters.

I am grateful to my fellow Directors for the quality of discussion, the respect shown for differing perspectives, and the shared commitment to what is best for the sport as a whole. I also extend my thanks to the CEO and staff team of Equestrian Canada for their leadership, expertise, and dedication. This



meeting set a strong foundation for the work ahead as we move forward together under Strategy 2028 and toward our long-term Vision 2030.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Robertson

President

On behalf of Equestrian Canada and its Board of Directors, this concludes the President's Report of the Board Meeting held September 26 and 27, 2025, in Langley, British Columbia.

Fostering a love of horses and sport, for life.